



News Release

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Final Recovery Plan for Bexar County Karst Invertebrates Available

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) announced today in the Federal Register the availability of the final recovery plan (Plan) for nine Karst Invertebrates which occur in Bexar County, Texas. The five year status review for these species, which was just completed, is available at the address below.

The nine Bexar County karst invertebrates were protected as endangered under the Endangered Species Act on December 26, 2000. These invertebrates are troglobites, spending their entire lives underground, inhabiting caves and mesocaverns (humanly impassable voids in karst limestone) in Bexar County, Texas. They are characterized by small or absent eyes and pale coloration. These species are *Rhadine exilis*, *R. infernalis*, *Batrisodes venyivi*, *Texella cokendolpheri*, *Neoleptoneta microps*, *Cicurina baroni*, *C. madla*, *C. venii*, and *C. vespera*.

Karst is a complex geologic formation in central Texas, that contains limestone caverns and sinkholes that have been carved by water.

The Plan includes scientific information about the species and provides objectives and actions needed to recover the Bexar County karst invertebrates, with the goal of ultimately removing them from the list of threatened and endangered species. The Plan lays out recovery actions designed to achieve these objectives. The primary threat to these species is habitat loss.

The recovery strategy includes steps to reduce threats to the species by protecting an adequate quantity and quality of karst areas to ensure a high probability of the species' long-term survival by securing adequate habitat. This includes selecting caves or cave clusters that represent the range of the species and potential genetic diversity for the nine species, then preserving these karst habitats, including their drainage basins and the surface communities they rely on. Because four of these species are known to occur in only one cave, full recovery may not be possible for these species. The Plan also incorporates applicable public and peer review comments.

You may obtain copies of the recovery plan from Cyndee Watson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 10711 Burnet Road, Suite #200, Austin, Texas, (512-490-0057 ext. 223) or download it from the internet at <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/species/recovery-plans.html>.

The health of threatened and endangered species is strongly linked to our own well-being. Millions of Americans depend on habitat that sustains these species – for clean air and water, recreational opportunities and for their livelihoods. By taking action to protect imperiled native fish, wildlife and plants, we can ensure a healthy future for our community.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov. Connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/usfws, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfwshq, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwshq>.

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